

REMARKS

Claim 13 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, in order to help expedite the processing of this application to issuance. The applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated September 28, 2006.

Claims 11, 12, 15 and 16 are pending in this patent application, claim 15 being an independent claim.

As to the merits of this case, the applicants and their undersigned representative thank the Examiner for now indicating that claims 11, 12, 15 and 16 are allowed.

However, claim 13 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ohno (U.S. Patent No. 4,851,668). The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection.

As indicated above, claim 13 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Thus, the rejection of claim 13 is now moot.

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/657,192
Response filed November 28, 2006
Reply to OA dated September 28, 2006

In view of the above, the withdrawal of the outstanding anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on Ohno (U.S. Patent No. 4,851,668) is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

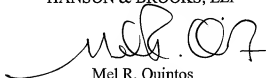
If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

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In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, KRATZ, QUINTOS,
HANSON & BROOKS, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MR. QUINTOS', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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